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[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/431)*]

72/144. Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 57/167 of 18 December 2002, in which it endorsed the Political Declaration[1] and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing,[2] its resolution 58/134 of 22 December 2003, in which it took note, inter alia, of the road map for the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, and its resolutions 60/135 of 16 December 2005, 61/142 of 19 December 2006, 62/130 of 18 December 2007, 63/151 of 18 December 2008, 64/132 of 18 December 2009, 65/182 of 21 December 2010, 66/127 of 19 December 2011, 67/139 and 67/143 of 20 December 2012, 68/134 of 18 December 2013, 69/146 of 18 December 2014, 70/164 of 17 December 2015 and 71/164 of 19 December 2016,

Recognizing that, in many parts of the world, awareness of the Madrid Plan of Action remains limited or non-existent, which limits the scope of implementation efforts,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,[3]

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[4] and stressing the need to ensure that issues of relevance to older persons are taken into account in its implementation in order to ensure that no one is left behind, including older persons,

Noting the recent regional developments on the protection and promotion of the human rights of older persons, including the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa,

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[1] *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8–12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[2] Ibid., annex II.

[3] A/72/161 and A/72/161/Corr.1.

[4] Resolution 70/1.

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Noting also that, between 2017 and by 2030, the number of persons aged 60 years or over is projected to grow by 46 per cent, from 962 million to 1.4 billion, globally outnumbering youth, as well as children under the age of 10,[5] and that this increase will be the greatest and the most rapid in the developing world, and recognizing that greater attention needs to be paid to the specific challenges affecting older persons, including in the field of human rights,

Recalling World Health Assembly resolutions on ageing, specifically resolution 58.16 of 25 May 2005 on strengthening active and healthy ageing,[6] which stressed the important role of public health policies and programmes in enabling the rapidly growing number of older persons to remain in good health and maintain their many vital contributions to the well-being of their families, communities and societies, resolution 65.3 of 25 May 2012 on strengthening non-communicable disease policies to promote active ageing,[7] which recognized that population ageing is among the major factors contributing to the rising incidence and prevalence of non-communicable diseases, and resolution 69.3 of 29 May 2016, entitled "Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health 2016–2020: towards a world in which everyone can live a long and healthy life",[8]

Acknowledging that many developing countries and countries with economies in transition are confronting a double burden of fighting emerging and re-emerging communicable diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, in parallel with the increasing threat of non-communicable diseases, and expressing concern about the impact on older persons,

Concerned that many health systems are not sufficiently prepared to respond to the needs of the rapidly ageing population, including the need for preventive, curative, palliative and specialized care,

Deeply concerned that the situation of older persons in many parts of the world has been negatively affected by the world financial and economic crisis, and noting with concern the high incidence of poverty among them,

Recognizing the essential contribution that older persons can continue to make to the functioning of societies and towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development if adequate guarantees are in place,

Concerned about the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that may create additional vulnerabilities for older persons and affect their enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and noting that older women often face multiple forms of discrimination resulting from gender inequality,

Recognizing that the systematic review of the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action by Member States at the national, regional and international levels is essential for its success in improving the quality of life of older persons and promoting the development of a society for all ages, underlining in this regard the coordinating role of the Commission for Social Development in this process, and acknowledging the ongoing work under the third five-year review and appraisal cycle of the Madrid Plan of Action and looking forward to its results, which will be assessed at the fifty-sixth session of the Commission for Social Development, in 2018,

1. *Reaffirms* the Political Declaration[1] and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002;[2]

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[5] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Prospects: 2017 Revision*.

[6] See World Health Organization, document WHA58/2005/REC/1.

[7] See World Health Organization, document WHA65/2012/REC/1.

[8] See World Health Organization, document WHA69/2016/REC/1.

2. *Calls upon* all States and the international community to cooperate, support and participate in the global efforts towards an age-inclusive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[4] and to mobilize all necessary resources and support in that regard, according to national plans and strategies, including through an integrated and multifaceted approach to improving the well-being of older persons, and in this regard encourages Member States to seize this opportunity to take into account issues of relevance to older persons in their efforts to promote the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals;

3. *Recognizes* that the major challenges faced by older persons undermine their social, economic and cultural participation;

4. *Also recognizes* the challenges related to the enjoyment of all human rights that older persons face in different areas and that those challenges require in depth analysis and action to address protection gaps, and calls upon all States to promote and ensure the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for older persons, including by progressively taking measures to combat age discrimination, neglect, abuse and violence, to provide social protection, access to food and housing, health care, employment, legal capacity and access to justice and to address issues related to social integration and gender inequality, bearing in mind the crucial importance of intergenerational family interdependence, solidarity and reciprocity for social development;

5. *Takes note with appreciation* of the work of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, and stresses the importance of close coordination between the work of the Independent Expert and the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing established by the General Assembly in paragraph 28 of its resolution 65/182, while avoiding unnecessary duplication of their respective mandates and those of other special procedures and subsidiary organs of the Human Rights Council, and relevant United Nations bodies and treaty bodies;

6. *Takes note* of the report of the Independent Expert issued at the thirty-sixth session of the Human Rights Council,[9] and encourages Member States to be mindful of the recommendations contained therein;

7. *Invites* Member States to continue to share their national experiences in developing and implementing policies and programmes aimed at strengthening the promotion and protection of the human rights of older persons, including within the framework of the Open-ended Working Group;

8. *Encourages* Governments to actively address, through national, regional and international efforts, issues that affect older persons and to ensure that the social integration of older persons and the promotion and protection of their rights form an integral part of development policies at all levels;

9. *Invites* Member States to adopt and implement non-discriminatory policies and to systematically review and amend, where appropriate, existing practices and regulations that discriminate against older persons in order to promote an enabling environment for older persons;

10. *Encourages* Member States to address the issue of discrimination on the basis of age in relevant national legislation and to take appropriate measures to prevent discrimination against older persons in, inter alia, employment, social protection and the provision of social, health-care and long-term care services;

11. *Calls upon* Member States to promote, in accordance with their national priorities, equitable and affordable access to sustainable basic physical and social

[9] A/HRC/36/48.

infrastructure for all, without discrimination, including affordable serviced land, housing, modern and renewable energy, safe drinking water and sanitation, safe, nutritious and adequate food, waste disposal, sustainable mobility, health care and family planning, education, culture and information and communications technologies, and to ensure that these services are responsive to the rights and needs of older persons, while recognizing that planning for and providing opportunities for making cities inclusive of older persons' economic and social participation is an important dimension of the construction of sustainable cities;

12. *Encourages* Member States to take into account the multidimensional nature of the vulnerability of older persons to poverty and economic insecurity, including through the promotion of good health, care and well-being, in their implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level;

13. *Encourages* Governments to pay greater attention to building capacity to eradicate poverty among older persons, in particular older women and older persons with disabilities, by mainstreaming ageing issues into poverty eradication measures, women's empowerment strategies and national development plans, and to include both ageing-specific policies and ageing-mainstreaming efforts in their national strategies;

14. *Encourages* Member States to consider expanding, in accordance with domestic legislation and policies, the reach of sustainable pension schemes, including, but not limited to, strategies such as social pensions, and increasing their benefits, with a view to ensuring income security in old age;

15. *Also encourages* Member States to strengthen their efforts to develop national capacities to address their national implementation priorities identified during the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action by considering and devising strategies that take into account the entirety of the human life course and foster intergenerational solidarity, the strengthening of institutional mechanisms, research, data collection and analysis and the training of necessary personnel in the field of ageing;

16. *Invites* Member States to identify key priority areas for the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, including empowering older persons and promoting their rights, raising awareness of ageing issues and building national capacities to address ageing;

17. *Recommends* that Member States increase efforts to raise awareness of the Madrid Plan of Action, including by promoting and supporting initiatives to advance a positive public image of older persons and their multiple contributions to their families, communities and societies and by working with the regional commissions and enlisting the help of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat in seeking increased attention for ageing issues;

18. *Encourages* Governments that have not done so to designate focal points for handling the follow-up of national plans of action on ageing, and also encourages Governments to strengthen existing networks of national focal points on ageing;

19. *Invites* Governments to conduct their ageing-related policies through inclusive and participatory consultations with relevant stakeholders and social development partners, in the interest of developing effective policies that create national policy ownership and consensus-building;

20. *Recommends* that Governments involve older persons and their organizations in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes that affect them;

21. *Recommends* that Member States enhance their capacity to more effectively collect data, statistics and qualitative information, disaggregated when necessary by relevant factors, including sex and disability, in order to improve assessment of the situation of older persons, and recognizes that the data revolution presents new opportunities and challenges for the use of new data to help with the measurement of progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular its aspects of relevance to older persons, and to ensure that no one is left behind;

22. *Stresses* the importance of developing improved age-disaggregated data, and in this regard welcomes the inclusion of the topic of ageing and age-disaggregated data on the agenda of the Statistical Commission;

23. *Encourages* States parties to existing international human rights instruments, where appropriate, to address the situation of older persons more explicitly in their reports, and encourages treaty body monitoring mechanisms and special procedures mandate holders, in accordance with their mandates, to pay due regard to the situation of older persons in their dialogue with Member States, in their consideration of reports or in their country missions;

24. *Encourages* Governments to continue their efforts to implement the Madrid Plan of Action and to mainstream the concerns of older persons into their policy agendas, bearing in mind the crucial importance of intergenerational family interdependence, solidarity and reciprocity for social development and the realization of all human rights for older persons, and to prevent age discrimination and provide social integration;

25. *Recognizes* the importance of strengthening intergenerational partnerships and solidarity, and in this regard calls upon Member States to promote opportunities for voluntary, constructive and regular interaction between young people and older generations in the family, the workplace and society at large;

26. *Encourages* Member States to adopt social policies that promote the development of community services for older persons, taking into account the psychological and physical aspects of ageing and the special needs of older women and older persons with disabilities;

27. *Also encourages* Member States to ensure that older persons have access to information about their rights so as to enable them to participate fully and justly in their societies and to claim full enjoyment of all human rights;

28. *Calls upon* Member States to develop their national capacity for monitoring and enforcing the rights of older persons, in consultation with all sectors of society, including organizations of older persons, through, inter alia, national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, where applicable;

29. *Also calls upon* Member States to strengthen and incorporate a gender and disability perspective into all policy actions on ageing, as well as to address and eliminate discrimination on the basis of age, sex or disability, and recommends that Member States engage with all sectors of society, in particular with relevant organizations with an interest in the matter, including organizations of older persons, women and persons with disabilities, in changing negative stereotypes about older persons, in particular older women and older persons with disabilities, and promote positive images of older persons;

30. *Acknowledges* that universal health coverage implies that all people, including older persons, have access, without discrimination, to nationally determined sets of needed promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative basic health services and essential, safe, affordable, effective and quality medicines, while

ensuring that the use of such services does not expose older persons to financial hardship, with a special emphasis on the poor, vulnerable and marginalized;

31. *Urges* Member States to develop, implement and evaluate policies and programmes that promote healthy and active ageing and the highest attainable standard of health and well-being for older persons and to develop health care for older persons as part of primary care in the existing national health systems;

32. *Recognizes* the importance of training, education and capacity-building of the health workforce, including for home-based care;

33. *Encourages* Member States to ensure that the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of age is incorporated and upheld in health policies and programmes and that the implementation of such policies and programmes is regularly monitored;

34. *Urges* Member States to strengthen intersectoral policy frameworks and institutional mechanisms, as appropriate, for the integrated management of the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, including health promotion, health care and social welfare services, in order to address the needs of older persons;

35. *Encourages* Member States to provide services and support to older persons, including grandparents, who have assumed responsibility for children who were abandoned or whose parents are deceased, have migrated or are otherwise unable to care for their dependants;

36. *Calls upon* Member States to address the issue of the well-being of and adequate health care for older persons, as well as any cases of neglect, abuse and violence against older persons, in particular older women, by designing and implementing more effective prevention strategies and stronger laws and by developing coherent and comprehensive policy frameworks to address these problems and their underlying factors;

37. *Also calls upon* Member States to take concrete measures to further protect and assist older persons in emergency situations, in accordance with the Madrid Plan of Action and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030;[10]

38. *Stresses* that, in complementing national development efforts, enhanced international cooperation, in particular North-South cooperation, which is complemented by South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation, is essential to support developing countries in implementing the Madrid Plan of Action, while recognizing the importance of such assistance as well as the provision of financial assistance;

39. *Encourages* Member States to establish or to strengthen strategic approaches and policy options in relation to the physical and mental health of older persons in the light of new and emerging disease patterns, notably non-communicable diseases, as well as in relation to increased life expectancy, with particular attention to promoting good health and addressing health needs across a care continuum, including prevention, detection and diagnosis, management and rehabilitation, treatment and palliative care, with the aim of achieving comprehensive health-care coverage for older persons;

40. *Encourages* the international community, including international and bilateral donors, to enhance international cooperation to support national efforts to eradicate poverty, in keeping with internationally agreed goals, in order to achieve sustainable and adequate social and economic support for older persons, while

[10] Resolution 69/283, annex II.

bearing in mind that countries have the primary responsibility for their own economic and social development;

41. *Also encourages* the international community to support national efforts to forge stronger partnerships with civil society, including organizations of older persons, academia, research foundations, community-based organizations, including caregivers, and the private sector, in an effort to help to build capacity on ageing issues;

42. *Encourages* the international community and the relevant agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to support national efforts to provide funding for research and data-collection initiatives on ageing, as appropriate, in order to better understand the challenges and opportunities presented by population ageing and to provide policymakers with more accurate and more specific information with regard to a gender perspective on ageing;

43. *Recognizes* the important role of various international and regional organizations that deal with training, capacity-building, policy design and monitoring at the national and regional levels in promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, and acknowledges the work that is undertaken in various parts of the world, as well as regional initiatives, such as the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Asunción from 27 to 30 June 2017, the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Third Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, held in Bangkok from 12 to 14 September 2017, and the fourth Economic Commission for Europe Ministerial Conference on Ageing, held in Lisbon on 21 and 22 September 2017, and the regional review processes and reports of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Economic Commission for Africa, as well as the work of institutes such as the International Institute on Ageing in Malta and the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research in Vienna;

44. *Takes note with appreciation* of the establishment of an informal network of interested United Nations entities to exchange information and integrate ageing into their work programmes on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

45. *Requests* the focal point on ageing of the United Nations system, the Programme on Ageing of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, to continue to enhance its collaboration with the focal points of the regional commissions, funds and programmes, and recommends that Member States reaffirm the roles of focal points within the United Nations system, increase technical cooperation efforts, consider expanding the role of the regional commissions on ageing issues and continue to provide resources for those efforts, facilitate the coordination of national and international non-governmental organizations on ageing and enhance cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, to promote ageing issues and develop partnerships in this regard;

46. *Reiterates* the need for additional capacity-building at the national level in order to promote and facilitate further implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, as well as the results of its review and appraisal cycle, and in this regard encourages Governments to support the United Nations trust fund for ageing so as to enable the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to provide expanded assistance to countries, upon their request;

47. *Requests* the United Nations system to strengthen its capacity to support, in an efficient and coordinated manner, national implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, where appropriate;

48. *Requests* relevant entities of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), to ensure that the situation of older women is mainstreamed and incorporated across their work and to support, in accordance with their respective mandates, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular its aspects of relevance to older persons, including gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls;

49. *Invites* relevant entities of the United Nations system, including UN-Women, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Health Organization, among others, as well as the International Organization for Migration, to include in reports to their respective governing bodies relevant information on efforts made by Member States and the international community on issues of relevance to older persons, including their social inclusion;

50. *Notes with appreciation* the work of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing,[11] and recognizes the positive contributions of Member States, as well as relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, including relevant human rights mandate holders and treaty bodies and the regional commissions, as well as national human rights institutions, intergovernmental and relevant non-governmental organizations with an interest in the matter and invited panellists, during the first eight working sessions of the Working Group, and invites Member States, as well as relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders, to continue to make contributions to the work entrusted to the Working Group, as appropriate;

51. *Encourages* Member States to continue to contribute to the work of the Open-ended Working Group, in particular by presenting measures to enhance the promotion and protection of the human rights and dignity of older persons, such as best practices, lessons learned and possible content for a multilateral legal instrument, as appropriate, in order to enable it to fulfil its existing mandate of strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons by considering the existing international framework of the human rights of older persons and identifying possible gaps and how best to address them, including by considering, as appropriate, the feasibility of further instruments and measures;

52. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide all necessary support to the Open-ended Working Group, within existing resources, for the organization of its ninth working session, in 2018, and to include the annual sessions of the Working Group in the Organization's calendar of conferences and meetings;

53. *Invites* the Independent Expert to address and engage in an interactive dialogue with the General Assembly at its seventy-third session under the agenda item entitled "Social development";

54. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

73rd plenary meeting
19 December 2017

[11] A/AC.278/2016/2 and A/AC.278/2017/2.